PREFACE

The Green and Golden Bell Frog leapt into prominence in 1992 when it was officially listed as endangered in New South Wales (Lunney and Ayres 1993; Lunney *et al.* 1996). Prior to that it was common (Barker and Grigg 1977). My first professional encounter with this handsome frog was in 1980 during a survey of the fauna of the coastal forests near Bega where we recorded it as "uncommon, found only in farm dams on the lower reaches of the Murrah River" (Lunney and Barker 1986). When another survey is conducted to look for changes over time, this frog shall be assiduously sought. On the basis of the grim tales emerging from the papers in this edition of the *Australian Zoologist* one would be lucky to find it.

Graham Pyke, from the Australian Museum, rang me in mid 1995 and asked if the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales would be interested in publishing the outcome of his successful one-day conference on the subject that has now become the title of this publication. This proposal was taken to the Council of the RZS which endorsed the idea. The rules of the game were that Graham Pyke and Will Osborne were to edit the papers to publication standard, that the refereeing of their own papers would be arranged through me as the Society editor to retain the critical independence of the refereeing process, and that the final judgment with respect to publication remained with the Society which is, after all, the publisher. Both readily agreed because they are familiar with review procedures, they accept the same quality of refereeing that they require of others and they value the widely accepted standard set by RZS publications. The result is this excellent theme edition, which not only deals with an important Australian representative of the amphibia, but is also a neat study of how quickly the conservation status of a species can change.

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